



Massachusetts National Guard

Public Affairs

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News Release

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Mass. Guard Members Participate in Kosovo Mission Ceremony

CAMP ATTERBURY, Ind. – After successfully completing weeks of mobilization training, Massachusetts Soldiers from Kosovo Force Eight Multinational Task Force - East marked another milestone in their journey to the Balkans with a departure ceremony here Sunday, Oct. 8, 2006.

MNTF-E is a brigade-sized task force that will conduct peacekeeping operations in Kosovo as part of a NATO-led force that has been in the province since 1999. Five multinational brigade-sized task forces make up the KFOR, and MNTF-E will be assuming authority for the eastern area of operations.

"I couldn't be prouder of the men and women that stand before you today," said Brig. Gen. Douglas B. Earhart, commander of MNTF-E for the KFOR 8 rotation. "While we came here from different places and different components of the U.S. Army, we leave here united under the flag of the historic 29th Infantry Division. Each one of you should feel a great sense of accomplishment for what you have done here."

Following the ceremony, the Soldiers were released for a week of leave, after which MNTF-E will deploy overseas.

MNTF-E is comprised of approximately 1,500 Soldiers from 22 different states and Puerto Rico. The Massachusetts and Virginia National Guard provide nearly two-thirds of the task force members. Participating Massachusetts units include the 1st Squadron 182nd Cavalry (Melrose, Mass.), 101st Engineer Battalion (Whitinsville, Mass.), and A Company 1st Battalion 181st Infantry (Agawam, Mass.).

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Lt. Col. Eric T. Furey, commander of the 1st Squadron 182nd Cavalry and Task Force Patriot (one of the MNTF-E maneuver battalions) noted that though Kosovo has disappeared from the headlines, people can still find information on the Internet. "All you have to do is Google it," he said. Furey added that anyone wanting to keep track of MNTF-E's progress can visit the KFOR 8 Web site at: <http://www.kfor8.com>.

The following photos are available upon request (photos by Maj. Winfield Danielson, Massachusetts National Guard Public Affairs):

133_3336a - Members of the Massachusetts Army National Guard's 101st Engineer Battalion Forward Detachment (Whitinsville, Mass.) salute while in mass formation with the rest of Task Force Military Police during the arrival of the official party at the Kosovo Force Eight Multinational Task Force-East departure ceremony in Camp Atterbury, Ind., Sunday.

133_3347a - Headquarters 1st Squadron 182nd Cavalry (Melrose, Mass.) in formation during the Kosovo Force Eight Multinational Task Force-East departure ceremony at Camp Atterbury, Ind., Sunday.

133_3356 - Members of Task Force Patriot, comprised primarily of Headquarters Troop (Melrose, Mass.), A Troop (Middleboro, Mass.) and B Troop (Melrose, Mass.) of the 1st Squadron 182nd Cavalry, repeat the Soldier's Creed during the Kosovo Force Eight Multinational Task Force-East departure ceremony at Camp Atterbury, Ind., Sunday.

133_3368 - Former Massachusetts Guard member Maj. Gen. Arthur H. Wyman, commander of the 29th Infantry Division, wishes members of Task Force Patriot well after the Kosovo Force Eight Multinational Task Force-East departure ceremony at Camp Atterbury, Ind., Sunday.